

The Nation.

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The Week.

WE have discussed elsewhere Secretary Sherman's conversation with the Senate Committee, without, however, going over his statements *seriatim*. One of them, on which we have not touched, is remarkable for the illustration it affords of the facility and rapidity with which the Secretary can reconcile himself to even gross violations of the national faith. The statute of February 25, 1862, creating the Sinking Fund, which has never been repealed, provides that "all duties on imported goods shall be paid in coin [or in demand notes, no longer in existence], . . . and the coin so paid shall be set apart as a special fund, and shall be applied as follows: first to the payment in coin of the interest on the bonds and notes of the United States, and, second, to the purchase or payment of one per cent. of the entire debt of the United States, etc." This act has constituted a pledge of the most solemn kind to all creditors of the United States on loans contracted since that date. Nevertheless, when asked at the late interview what Congress could do to aid resumption, he calmly said that "he would recommend one thing—that on the first of October next he should be allowed to receive notes for duties." It ought to be said that he thinks the notes will be then at par in gold; but he has no right to ask the public creditor to accept the prophecy of an individual in lieu of a national pledge. Too much financial legislation has been already based on prophecy.

The correspondence between Sir Edward Thornton and Mr. Fish about the appointment of the umpire in the Fisheries Commission shows beyond question that M. Delfosse was mentioned by Lord Ripon at Washington, during the negotiation of the Treaty, as a person to whom the United States would probably, and justifiably, object on account of the peculiar political relations existing between Great Britain and Belgium; that this objection was made and adhered to by Mr. Fish during the three months within which it was open to the two parties to agree on the third arbitrator, and the names of six other foreign ministers accredited to Washington were suggested by him and rejected by Lord Granville, who did urge M. Delfosse; that finally, through non-agreement, the choice fell to Count Beust, the Austrian Minister at London, who appointed M. Delfosse, and then no further objection was made by the United States. If it was believed, however, that M. Delfosse was so disqualified as to be unlikely to make a fair decision, his appointment ought to have been then protested against, and the litigation ought not to have been entered on before him. No such protest was, however, made, and the case was submitted to him. There can, therefore, be but one valid excuse now for disputing his judgment, or refusing to abide by it, and that is the belief that he decided corruptly. No such charge is made; in fact, those who propose to disregard his verdict at the same time express high respect for his character, so that the meaning of the discontent is really that we do not like to pay so much money, and this is what ought to be said frankly.

It was shown very conclusively in the debate in the Senate last week that the Senators who were attacking Mr. Schurz about the timber depredations neither knew what the law was nor what the practice of the Department in times past had been. In fact, they were overthrown at every point. Secretary Schurz has been executing the law, and they did not like it, but did not know what ailed them, and thought their suffering was caused, not by their having thieves as their protégés, but by his having been born in Prussia. They have now endeavored to apply a remedy, by enacting, not that the Secretary of the Interior must be a native Ameri-

can, but that the appropriation for the prosecution of timber-thefts shall be so small that no such proceedings can take place; and they also provide that the cutting of Government timber shall not be unlawful unless for export from the Territory in which it occurs; and this intent to export is, of course, in the region where these depredations are committed, almost incapable of proof. So that in one way or another they have paralyzed the efforts of the Department to protect public property, and this through low demagoguery and blind hatred of the Administration; and they evidently think the people of the United States like or admire tactics of this sort.

The public will recognize, apropos of the above, an old and now familiar friend in this "story" of the Washington correspondent of the *Tribune*—that Senator Howe was about to make "some very severe attacks on the Southern policy of the Administration; that this speech is to be followed by others in the same strain, and that, in order to prevent the Republican party in Congress from placing itself in open antagonism to the Administration, the President will, in deference to what is believed to be the general sentiment, call to his Cabinet some representative of the more radical wing of the party. To do this it would, of course, be necessary to ask the resignation of one of his present Cabinet Ministers." We are able to add to this interesting narrative something that we found out ourselves by merely guessing—and that is, that the Cabinet Minister whose resignation will be asked in the contingency aforesaid is a man named Schurz, German by birth, and justly obnoxious to innumerable "active and intelligent" rascals. This story is not, however, as valuable as it seems at first sight, and the correspondent judiciously calls it "sensational." We believe that the President was fully prepared for Senator Howe's speech, as well as for those that are "to follow," and all their horrible consequences. He is a pious man, and feels that he is in the hands of Providence, and, like Mr. Evarts, who when solemnly warned by an officious friend against using coffee after drinking Saratoga water, on the ground that it would "precipitate the salts," declared that "he liked to have his salts precipitated," would apparently rather enjoy seeing "the Republican party in Congress placing itself in open antagonism to the Administration."

The attack by Senator Howe came in due course on Monday. It was three hours long, and was carefully written out, and was in the main a very dull history of the Republican party, seasoned with denunciation of the President's policy, of the South, and of Secretary Schurz. By far the greater part would not repay the reading, much less the criticism, of anybody engaged in an honest calling. For the errors of the President's policy, if errors there are, he offered no remedy whatever. For the improvement of the condition of the South, as Mr. Howe describes it, he suggested a course of hate and annoyance on the part of the North, but then acknowledged ruefully that as the Democrats were coming into power there would be no chance of pursuing any such course. The attack on Mr. Schurz was very personal and bitter and carefully prepared. It would, of course, never have been delivered if Mr. Schurz had been in the Senate and able to reply to it. The *Tribune* says the assault will "attract attention," which is quite true—its own attacks on Mr. Schurz have attracted "attention"; but the question is, Whom does "the attention" most damage?

The Senate's achievements during the week have been the passage of a bill to encourage tree-planting on Government lands, and the passage, three days afterwards, of the so-called Little Deficiency Bill, ingeniously contrived to perpetuate the present wholesale destruction of timber. The net result of the week's work is therefore almost invisible. The House has passed a useful bill to reform the advertising of mail contracts, and the Naval Appropriation Bill,

whose specifications are minute beyond precedent, and therefore well calculated to prevent abuses in the expenditure, by one department, of moneys intended for another, and in other ways. Finally, the House refused on Monday the necessary two-thirds to three efforts to commit it to an extension of its financial meddling on behalf of silver, an irredeemable currency, and inflation. Mr. Springer's motion was to suspend the rules in order to fix a day for the consideration of his bill authorizing the coinage of gold and silver on the same terms, and the issue of certificates alike on gold and silver deposits in the Treasury. This failed by 140 yeas to 102 nays. Mr. Goode moved to suspend the rules in order to pass the bill suspending the operation of the Sinking Fund Act for five years; lost by 123 yeas to 112 nays. Mr. Durham moved to suspend the rules in order to fix a day for the consideration of Mr. Stephens's bill to secure bullion certificates for silver; lost by 142 yeas to 96 nays. The Tariff Bill was reported to the House on Tuesday, and by an almost party vote was assigned to the Committee of the Whole for April 4; yeas, 137; nays, 114, of whom only 13 were Democrats. The "free-ships" section has been struck out.

The judgment of the Louisiana Supreme Court in Anderson's case calls attention in very proper and dignified language to the fact that an open letter of certain "visiting statesmen," including Mr. John Sherman, Mr. Stanley Matthews, and others, addressed to the prisoner, had been printed and spread before the court in his counsel's brief, "in which the public and the people from whom the jurors were to be drawn were informed that he was falsely accused and maliciously persecuted." The court then went on to say that a somewhat similar incident occurred in England during the Tichborne case, which produced such extraordinary excitement, both in political and social life, that during the trial Mr. Onslow, a member of Parliament, wrote a letter saying the claimant was falsely accused and maliciously persecuted, whereupon the Lord Chief-Justice had him (Onslow) arrested, fined him \$1,200, and sent him to the county jail in default of payment, and the House of Commons, though then in session, sanctioned the punishment. The court leaves the application of the story to the public, and we must say that if it could have got at a "visiting statesman" and locked him up for a short period, it would have done service to the administration of justice and helped in the purification of public morals.

Another report of the South Carolina Fraud Committee has been made, containing more testimony seriously involving the reputation of Mr. D. H. Chamberlain. A ring was formed in 1870, the committee report, to get control of the Greenville & Columbia Railroad, a corporation the stock of which was mostly owned by the State. The "ground-floor" of this venture was divided into twelve shares of \$20,000 each, of which Senator Patterson took one; Niles G. Parker, State Treasurer, one; George W. Waterman, representing Governor Scott, two; Reuben Tomlinson, State Auditor, one-half of one; Kimpton, the financial agent, two; Cardozo, Secretary of State, one-half of one; Neagle, Comptroller-General, one and a half; and Chamberlain, Attorney-General, one-half of one. Parker swears that, according to his understanding of the matter, Chamberlain's share was paid for by Kimpton; and that Kimpton would be selected as Chamberlain's go-between is antecedently probable, as it was on Chamberlain's recommendation that Kimpton, who was his classmate, but an unknown and penniless adventurer, was made financial agent of the State, without being obliged to give any security save his own bond. This Ring, it will be observed, consisted of all the chief officers of the State. On its formation measures were at once taken to secure legislation authorizing the sale of the State stock in the railroads, and for this purpose an act was passed creating a commission, composed of Scott, Chamberlain, Neagle, the Chairman of the House Committee of Ways and Means, and the Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Senate, to sell all the "unproductive property" of the State. Ostensibly, the object of the bill was to dispose of a quantity of dam-

aged granite and marble; but the commission at once turned its attention to quite another quarter, and sold 21,698 shares of stock in the Greenville & Columbia Railroad (which cost the State \$433,960) for \$59,669.50. The committee say that this was followed by a sacrifice of the interest of the State in all the other railroads in which it was interested, and the accumulation of a fund which was transferred to the financial agent and lost by "hypothecation" and "general bond-swindling." The stock was sold without advertisement, and without even the formality of an authorization by the commission, or any limitation as to price. The act, it is needless to add, was passed by bribery.

The stock having thus been acquired, more legislation for the purpose of selling bonds was needed, and another bill, drawn up by Chamberlain, was introduced on February 17, 1871. By the existing laws the State had a first lien for her endorsement of the bonds of the company, which made subsequent bonds of little value. A section of Chamberlain's bill therefore provided that the State's lien should be changed from a first to a second mortgage, thus enabling the Ring to float their own bonds, and to saddle the State with the liability for them. It appears further that the Ring did not, by any means, "put up" the \$240,000 required as the basis of this operation in money of their own, but that this was obtained, at any rate in great part, by Kimpton's sales of State bonds. The money for Chamberlain's share appears to have been obtained in this way; according to Parker's testimony the understanding was that "the amount of these expenditures and many others should be realized from State bonds, and covered by the difference between the actual amounts for which the bonds were sold by Kimpton, and the amount which he should report that he had sold them for." It will be remembered that Chamberlain, when first accused of complicity with the Ring, had a great deal to say about the "Finance Board" and the "Financial Agent." The Board consisted simply of three members of the Ring, and the agent's operations are tersely described by the committee as follows: He sold over \$8,000,000 of bonds, and "for nine-tenths of this enormous amount there is no mention even of the rates of sales"; \$2,843,000 bonds are reported by him as all sold on one day, and \$4,214,500 on another. Some of the testimony appended to the report is very amusing. Kimpton in one of his letters to Parker urges him to hurry up the "collection of taxes," so as to stop a panic in the bonds on the New York market, which he is afraid will exhaust his "collaterals" if it is not stopped. Moses, who was Speaker of the House, made a very handsome profit out of the Ring's railroad legislation, first selling the appointment of the committees for \$25,000, and then stopping the passage of one of the Ring's bills by "recognizing" two reformers, who were fighting the bill tooth and nail by making dilatory motions, until he secured \$10,000 more; after which the two reformers found that, for some reason or other, the Speaker's attention could not be got. The South Carolina House of Representatives has passed a concurrent resolution authorizing the Governor to have any of the Ring prosecutions *not* pressed at his discretion; the object being, of course, to get some of the lesser rogues to turn State's evidence.

Both branches of the Iowa Legislature have passed an act repealing the Granger legislation of that State fixing freight charges. The legislation has, of course, aroused great hostility, and proved impracticable in operation. Probably in a few years all the Granger acts will be swept off the statute-books of the Western States, and no trace will be left of the great Granger movement save the reports of some very extraordinary decisions by the courts made under the influence of the excitement, which will gradually be "qualified" and "distinguished" by new judges in such a way as to deprive them of the baleful effect which seemed at one time to be their necessary consequences. Probably a few years hence it will hardly be believed that, under the influence of the Granger craze, courts of last resort decided that laws fixing the price to be paid by merchants for a particular kind of service rendered by private individuals were constitutional, even though they affected the value of securities issued under

a tacit agreement with the State that the basis of their value should be those very services; just as it will probably require an effort to realize the fact that, in the present year of grace, the same community which devised these laws also invented the theory that the power to coin money included the right to debase the coinage.

The Attorney-General of this State has, in response to a resolution of the Assembly, given an opinion with regard to the constitutionality of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment, which fixes the annual city budget. This Board consists of the Mayor, the President of the Board of Aldermen, the Comptroller, and the President of the Department of Taxes and Assessments, and, under the present charter, it makes annually, by a vote required to be unanimous, a "provisional estimate" of the expenses of the city government for the ensuing year, which is then submitted to the Aldermen for their consideration; but, inasmuch as the Board have the power of overruling any objection made by the Aldermen, and as their action is final, and the estimates as passed by them become, without any further action, the budget for the year, and must be passed by the Aldermen, no objections of the latter are of much avail. The Attorney-General says that this is all constitutional, as being only a "restriction" upon the taxing power of the city, and that the Board of Estimate and Apportionment is not actually vested with the power of taxation. But, practically, of course, a Board which "restricts" the taxing power in this way has all the taxing power that any body has, and the object of the statute creating the Board is, as every one knows, to prevent the Aldermen from taxing us.

The whole question will shortly come before the courts, so we express no opinion on its legal aspects. But the matter has a practical bearing of great importance. The creation of what the *World* calls this "Council of Four," with only two elective members, and only one representing the legislative body of the municipal corporation, is merely the final step in a long series which have gradually vested the powers originally enjoyed by the corporation in a number of executive boards removed as far as possible from the popular constituency, which is allowed to go on year after year electing a simulacrum of a city legislature without character or power. To try to revivify this simulacrum and make it a real government, with two houses having general legislative powers, would be as ridiculous as to go back to town-pumps and volunteer firemen. To those who have supported the Constitutional Amendments (which merely altered the method of selecting the Board of Estimate and Apportionment by putting it in the hands of the tax-payers) there is something very amusing in seeing the Kelly Democrats, headed by the Boss's new Attorney-General, engaged in an active defence of a Board which has absolute authority over the taxes, and which exists for the express purpose of preventing universal suffrage from having its usual effect on the local tax-levy; or, in other words, of "robbing the poor man" of the legitimate influence of "his vote."

The importations of U. S. bonds from Europe continue in sufficient volume to take up all the bills made against the enormous exports of domestic products, and to maintain the rates for bills on London just a little below the point at which gold coin can be profitably exported. The nominal rates, 4.89½ for demand bills and 4.87½ for 60-day, are at the shipping point, but though they were reached early in the week the actual rates are yet ¼ of a cent below. There seems to be but one opinion as to specie exports, and that is that they will begin very soon, and will be continued, perhaps with interruptions, until the gold in the market (now about \$40,000,000) is exported. Some bankers think that this will occur before September, while others think that not more than \$25,000,000 will have been shipped by that time. The purchase in London of silver for coinage into 412½-grain dollars has not advanced the price there; it closed at 54½d. to 54¾d. per oz. The market here has been strong, however, and closed at a price that makes the bullion in one of these dollars worth about 92½ cents gold.

The *Paris Temps*, one of the soberest and most influential of the French papers, remarks on our Silver Law: "There is in the second section a singular economical error. The American legislator believes it to be possible to fix by law, without regard to market price, the relative value of gold and silver, and with this view he asks the Latin Union for a concurrence and agreement, which he cannot get." The foolish "gold-bug" evidently had not heard "the noise of the captains and the shouting" in Cincinnati and Chicago. Why, millions in the Mississippi valley say that this relative value can be fixed, and millions more say it makes no difference whether it can or not. Does a good loud yell count for nothing in a matter of this kind?

It is impossible to extract any new certainty from the jumble of conflicting reports about the negotiations for the European Congress. Appearances, however, all point to a strong determination on the part of Russia to prevent an Anglo-Austrian alliance, cost what it may in concessions to Austria. That this policy is telling on Austria, too, seems very probable; and it also seems probable that Bismarck is chuckling over the way the thing is working, and is surer than ever that all will "come out right in the end." There is perfect confidence in Russia that England without Austria is not a formidable antagonist to a power in Russia's present position, and the perception of this seems to be growing in England. The feeling in Russia, too, against England is becoming very bitter and defiant, which is quite natural, whether the Russian policy be honest or knavish. Lord Derby has made a somewhat despondent speech in Parliament about the Congress, and there is an uncomfortable suspicion out of doors that the Ministry is at the end of its resources, and that Lord Beaconsfield has, after all, no great *coup* in store. It would not be at all surprising now if the warlike preparations ended in a refusal by England to take part in the Congress, and the holding of it by the three Emperors, and the settlement of the Eastern question by them on a basis to be submitted to England afterwards for her approval, and which she will accept sulkily if it leaves the Dardanelles open, and so the whole cloud will blow over. The chances of war, in spite of the military preparations, seem to diminish every day. The great obstacle to it is that it could have no definite object considered attainable by any rational man. The time to have gone to war was before Plevna fell.

Bismarck is having a good deal of trouble in the internal affairs of the Empire, which probably in some degree distracts his attention from the Eastern question. He has long been annoyed by the covert hostility of the Prussian officials to the Imperial Administration of which he is the head, and some increase of control over them has been rendered all the more necessary because the Empire is not yet wholly independent of the individual states in the matter of finance. Its direct revenue levied by itself is derived from the customs, the telegraph, and the post-office; if its receipts from these sources are not sufficient, it has to rely on votes of the states legislatures to meet the deficiency; so that to get control of the situation he had a bill introduced in the Federal Council allowing him to appoint substitutes for himself in the various departments of the Empire, and these substitutes, it was understood, were to be the corresponding members of the Prussian Cabinet, who would in this way be brought under his direct orders. At the same time he proposed, by way of increasing the revenue, to increase the tax on tobacco, and to win over the Liberals to these changes by giving places in the Ministry to several leading members of the party. The scheme has broken down, however, owing to the refusal of the Liberals to make any change, unless the Government surrenders both in the Prussian and German Parliaments its present right to the permanency of every tax once voted; that is, under the present usage every tax is voted for all coming time, and the only power the legislature possesses over it is to increase it. The Liberals ask that hereafter taxes shall, as in England and America and France, be voted for only one year; but this would so seriously diminish the power of the Crown, particularly in military matters, that it is not likely to accede to it without a severe struggle.

SECRETARY SHERMAN ON RESUMPTION.

WE presume nobody who is acquainted with Secretary Sherman's career as a financier, supposed for one moment that his adaptation of himself and his policy to a new situation would be a pleasing spectacle for a moralist. We shall, therefore, not take the trouble to point out his inconsistencies in the remarkable conversation held by him with the Committee of the Senate on Tuesday, the 19th. We shall discuss his statements as if they were a financial programme emanating from a gentleman who has never been heard of until now—that is, on their merits solely, and without any reference to those of their author—and if we seem over-zealous in judging what many will consider a well-meaning attempt to solve a very difficult problem, our excuse is that, if there be one thing in the world about which self-deception or word-painting is dangerous, it is finance; if there be one thing about which it is not permissible to delude one's self or to shirk unpleasant facts, it is about the mode of meeting pecuniary obligations.

The Secretary was asked his opinion as to the effect of the Silver Law on resumption. He said it was in part favorable, in part unfavorable. He described the unfavorable effects first. It had stopped the sale of the four-per-cent. bonds, he said; it had stopped the accumulation of coin in the Treasury, and it had caused heavy returns of our bonds from Europe. These are simple statements of facts, and he was quite clear about them. Their meaning is obvious. The sale of the four-per-cent. bonds has stopped because such a shock has been given to the national credit that we have ceased to be a four-per-cent. nation—or, in other words, people will no longer lend to us at that rate of interest. Our bonds are coming back from Europe because large numbers of the holders doubt whether we shall long maintain our position as a six-per-cent. nation. They fear that the Silver Law will be followed by other laws of a still more mischievous character, and think, therefore, to use the language of the *London Times*, "that if the Americans are to try experiments on their credit, they had much better do so with the debt held at home than in English hands."

The immediate effect of this on the resumption problem is this: that the Europeans, in so far as they send bonds here for sale, pay for our products in bonds instead of gold, and may, by so doing, should our exports diminish at all, compel us to pay gold out instead of receiving it. In fact, they have very nearly brought us to that point already. Thus far there is a tolerably good market for the bonds here, owing to the badness of other investments and the abundance of money lying idle through the general want of confidence in the future. The existence of this market led the "Sycamore of the Wabash" to interject the remark that "capital seeks our bonds when this bi-metallic basis is declared"; but then the Sycamore's observations on financial questions, although he was one of the leaders of the silver movement, only call for Charles Lamb's reply to a person of similar calibre—that is, an examination of his bumps with a lighted candle. The unfavorable effects, then, of the Silver Law are that it has seriously injured our credit while we are still heavily in debt, and threatens to diminish our stock of gold on which we are relying for resumption, and cause the withdrawal of large bodies of capital which would otherwise be available for our domestic enterprises, by the sale of our securities by foreign bondholders. Financially speaking, it would be hard for the effect of anything to be more unfavorable.

The favorable effects of the Silver Law are, according to Mr. Sherman, first, that it has "satisfied a strong public demand for bi-metallic money, and, in a Government like ours, it is always good to obey the popular current." This would be a good enough remark coming from a politician who is getting ready for the fall election; but a financier cannot say that it is well to satisfy a popular demand for bi-metallic money by anything but two metals in circulation. A promise of bi-metallic circulation is not honest satisfaction, and an honest financier ought not to talk of it as such unless he believes that it will be fulfilled. That Mr. Sherman believes this is hardly possible. He knows, we venture to assert,

that as silver coin grows abundant, unless the price of silver bullion rises nine per cent., gold coin will disappear. If he believes that any such rise will take place in silver, he ought to have said so, and we have no doubt that had he believed it he would have said so. As matters stand, passing the Silver Law to satisfy "a popular demand for a bi-metallic currency" is very like Micawber's plan of settling a debt by giving a note.

Secondly, he says "resumption can be more readily maintained upon a double standard than on a single standard." This means, we presume (it cannot mean anything else), that it will be easier to redeem United States notes in gold or silver than in gold alone. This is true, in case gold and silver are at par; but if they are at par, it does not make any difference whether we have a double standard or not. If one can be had in the market at the same price as the other, it does not make any difference to a debtor whether both are a legal tender or only one, because with one he can buy an equivalent amount of the other. If they are not at par, Mr. Sherman will not resume or maintain resumption on a double standard; he will resume and maintain resumption on a single standard, composed of the cheaper metal of the two. So that his prospects as a resumer do not depend on the silver legislation, but on the market price of bullion. If by January 1, 1879, silver is as good as gold, he can resume on which he pleases; if silver is not as good as gold, he can only resume and maintain resumption in silver, because his gold will leave him for exportation. So that if he had given the Committee his views as to the course of the silver market, he would have gone to the core of the whole matter; but this he did not do.

The most important thing in the conversation was, however, the Secretary's entirely new definition of resumption; and to this we must ask the serious attention of our readers, for it is probably the most singular phenomenon of the present financial crisis. Resumption, as it has been understood, we venture to assert without fear of contradiction, ever since the close of the war has meant, in the eyes of all friends of honest government and sound currency, the redemption in coin of the promissory notes called greenbacks, issued and made legal tender by the Government to meet its necessities during the Rebellion. The evils, both public and private, of the existence of these notes have been fully demonstrated, and the object of the Resumption Act was to call them in and destroy them, and take the Government once for all out of the position both of an insolvent debtor and of an issuer of paper money. The resumption problem, therefore, as it has presented itself to the minds of those who have supported and fought for that Act, is to accumulate, and keep on hand in the Treasury, coin—we care not whether gold or silver—in sufficient quantity after Jan. 1, 1879, to pay the Government notes as they are from time to time presented, until they are all withdrawn and cancelled, and the Government is thus relegated to its old Constitutional function of issuing gold and silver coin, and this only, for currency. Mr. Sherman has maintained all along that he would be able to do this work of redemption in gold coin alone if Congress did not meddle with him. He now says he can do it better in gold and silver; but he has promulgated an entirely new definition of resumption. He says there are \$348,618,000 legal-tender notes outstanding, and, of course, presentable, but not likely to be presented, on the first of next January. To meet these he has or is likely to have, in round numbers, \$62,000,000 in gold and about \$9,000,000 in silver, or \$71,000,000. Being asked whether this was enough, he said no; that he could not resume with this, unless he used the power, which he believes he possesses, to reissue, or, in other words, keep afloat, \$300,000,000; and this power, he calmly announced, he meant to exercise. So that what he means by "resumption" is that about \$25,000,000 of greenbacks being always on deposit with the Treasurer for the redemption of bank-bills, and about \$20,000,000 more being likely to be withdrawn before January 1 by fresh issues of bank-bills, he would deal with the remaining \$300,000,000 by paying them on presentation, and then promptly reissuing them. In other words, he proposes to make three hundred millions of Government notes a permanent part of our circulation, and to add to this all the gold and silver that are put afloat.

It is true he thinks he will be able to pay these \$300,000,000 whenever they are presented, and they will therefore not, strictly speaking, possess the character of inconvertible paper; but there are, nevertheless, these serious and, indeed, fatal objections to his plan: It will be the imposition on the Government of the issue of paper money, or, in other words, of the functions of a national bank, as a permanent and normal duty, without any real authority of law, and by what it is not too strong language to call a trick or perversion of law on the part of an executive officer. It will keep in the arena of national politics and within the reach of Congress one of the most dangerous questions of our time, and the one which has done most to bring about the widespread financial disaster from which we are suffering—viz., the question whether the legislature has not the power to alter the standard of value, or even to issue money of no intrinsic value. Finally, it will furnish a constant incentive to high-handed attempts at inflation. The \$300,000,000 notes will be regarded by the ignorant as the "poor man's money," as distinguished from coin and bank-bills, or "rich man's money," and the pressure on the Government from the growing communistic element in the population to procure fresh issues of them whenever the times were hard, would convert our politics into a simple, constant struggle to save property from confiscation and the machinery of exchange from total derangement.

There is one merit in Mr. Sherman's talk with the Committee. Its evasiveness and vagueness, and the dexterity of its concessions to all schools of finance, will undoubtedly go a good way to quiet the extreme silver-men, and cause the Treasury to be let alone between now and next January; and that this is a gain we do not deny. But it is none the less true that were the President a financier the conversation would fill him with genuine alarm.

OUR DIPLOMATISTS.

MR. HEWITT'S sharp comments on our diplomatic establishment, and his sweeping proposal that our ministers in Europe should be cut down to two, and the places of the others taken by consuls, coupled with the recent appointment of Mr. Taylor to the German mission, have revived a discussion which has raged with short intermissions since the foundation of the Government, and which is apparently likely to last for another century. We have less diplomatic work to do than any other Power in the world, and yet no other Power has nearly as much trouble about its diplomatic machinery. The machinery is a copy, and in many ways a very absurd one, of that of European states, and were our foreign relations as complicated and as important as theirs it would probably have been remodelled or swept away long ago, just as the militia was remodelled and the elective officers swept away in the late war. Its defects have been largely concealed by the fact that the questions between us and foreign states which call for diplomatic treatment are few in number and for the most part trivial. When a really serious one arises our practice has been to put it into the hands of exceptionally able men who do not belong to the diplomatic calling in the strict sense of the term. The success of this plan has been very great, and has thrown a kind of glamour over our diplomatic system. We have, too, as a general rule, carried our point in disputing with European Powers; but this has been due in the main to agencies but slightly connected with the quality of our negotiators. In the first place, almost all our foreign controversies have arisen out of affairs on this continent, which are of comparatively small interest or importance to European governments, and about which they therefore defend themselves feebly—very feebly in contrast with American vigor and pertinacity. They are generally ready to yield or compromise about them, as troublesome rather than grave things. This weakness of theirs, too, is aggravated by the fact that while our powers of offence or annoyance in war would be very great, we are practically harder to get at than any civilized state. We cannot be invaded, and our ports are three thousand miles distant from every government which would dream of molesting them. Ameri-

cans have, ever since 1812, enjoyed a reputation, which the late war has greatly increased, for extraordinary ingenuity in being unpleasant to their enemies—for, in short, an originality in hostility which no Power cares to test. Finally, American abstinence from interference in European affairs deprives us of all weight in the calculations of European statesmen touching the more serious and pressing problems of their foreign policy. They have constantly to consider what almost every other civilized Power will think or do under such and such circumstances; but they hardly ever have to consider what the United States will say or do, and they are thankful for it, and, as a general rule, are not desirous that we should change our practice.

These things, and others which we have not space to mention, really make our diplomacy a good deal of a simulacrum. Our ministers play somewhat the part of the Swiss Guard at the Vatican. They may be armed, and tall, and brave, and well drilled; but everybody knows, and they know, that they will never have to attack anybody or defend anybody; that if there was a riot it would be suppressed by the police with clubs. Among European diplomats the American minister is not looked on as belonging, strictly speaking, to the corps. They are a professional body, with rules of promotion and of pay, and of fixity of tenure, like the army or navy, while he is an amateur, who has taken the business up for a short period as a sort of holiday, and he has none of the advantages of a professional position. The estimation in which he is held depends entirely on his personal qualities. Wherever he goes he has to make his own position, while all his colleagues have been long known in the diplomatic body, and have reached a mission or an embassy after long service in subordinate places. He is, therefore, very likely to be recalled before anybody begins to mind very much what he says or care when he goes. If, therefore, he had real diplomatic work to do; if he had to keep a genuine watch on his country's foreign relations, and her safety or welfare were really dependent on his influence or perspicacity, the system would, of course, have broken down utterly long ago. The country would never have allowed the politicians to use it as it has been used, as a reward for successful stump-speaking, or as a compensation for the loss of a seat in Congress, or for a heavy contribution to a campaign fund, any more than in actual war they would allow the army and navy to be commanded by successful musicians or skilful whist-players.

Our diplomatists having for the most part no serious duties, we have fallen not unnaturally into the way of looking at them as social representatives of the country in foreign capitals—that is, as persons whose principal business it is to give foreigners a fair idea of what we consider our best society. The difference between the United States and foreign governments here is that what to these is simply a means is to us an end. They make their minister at a foreign court a great "swell," with polished manners, a good house, and a large salary, and tried capacity for entertaining, in order to increase his influence with the governing class of the country to which he is accredited. We do the same thing, though in a minor degree, not for its effect on our foreign relations—for nobody really expects it to have any—but in order to show Europeans that we can turn out fine ladies and gentlemen too, if we please. As long as this function of social representation is the principal one of American diplomatists, and as long as American diplomatists have to rely for their weight and consideration at foreign courts on their position at home before they took to diplomacy, or, in other words, on their personal qualities, the bestowal of missions on men of literary distinction will, *pace* Mr. Hewitt, be as wise a thing as the Government can do. The appointments of such men as Mr. Marsh, Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Adams (who was neither a "practical politician" nor a lawyer), Mr. Lowell, and Mr. Taylor are the most creditable on the whole, and under existing circumstances, which it can make. Mr. Adams, who, although he had been in public life, was more "a scholar and a gentleman" than anything else, yet stood with complete success the severest business test to which the foreign minister of any power has been subjected for half a century. The others certainly give foreigners a far better opinion of American society than ap-

pointments made under the ordinary political usages would be likely to give, and have in virtue of their reputation at home a consideration as soon as they arrive which an obscure or unknown man, in the absence of professional status, would take a long time to acquire.

It has to be borne in mind, too, that even in the most democratic countries of Europe—France, for instance—practical politics are not yet divorced from mental culture. The men whom the French peasants, with all their passion for equality, are most eager to put in office are the most cultivated men in the nation. It is not uncommon either there or in England or Germany for prominent politicians to be men of high attainments in literature and science. Here, on the contrary, the very idea of a practical politician having anything to say worth listening to about literary, scientific, or historical matters excites a smile. An article or book by Conkling or Blaine or Hendricks or Voorhees on anything but “the machine” or “Hell” would be treated as a dull comedy. The politicians, on their side, repay this contempt of the public for their intellectual accomplishments by treating literary culture as a positive disqualification for participation in public affairs, and take it for granted that a literary man, or a man of literary tastes, whether a producer or not, will be sure to fail in any executive capacity. In Europe this is considered a barbarian’s notion. The fact that a man has distinguished himself in any civilized art raises the presumption, only to be rebutted by experiment, that he will succeed in others; and such a man gets an earlier and more careful hearing and creates a better impression about his country than any obscure lawyer, politician, or merchant could do. In fact, if Mr. Hewitt’s suggestion, which should include a thorough reform of the consular service, be not adopted, the very best change to make would be the exclusion from all the higher diplomatic posts of all persons who had made no reputation outside the United States. This would, of course, indicate that we “cared for abroad” a good deal; but the diplomatic service, as now organized, shows that we “care for abroad,” but do not know how to show it properly. The use to the people of the United States of paying an unknown American lawyer or merchant—ignorant of the world, of foreign languages, of literature, science, and art, dumb and ill at ease in all the social circles in which he finds himself, and thoroughly conversant with nothing but “the mechanism of government” in his own country—for lounging in a foreign capital, is something which nobody has explained or ever will explain.

DU CAMP’S ‘CONVULSIONS OF PARIS.’

PARIS, March 8, 1878.

M. MAXIME DU CAMP is one of those men whom the French call “originals.” He was born with a good fortune, and spent many years of his youth in long travels in Egypt and elsewhere. He wrote a few novels, which are now deservedly forgotten, such as ‘L’Homme au bracelet d’argent.’ He thought himself a man of imagination, and in that capacity he joined Garibaldi in the famous expedition of the “Mille” in Sicily, and entered Naples triumphantly on the staff of the famous hero of the red shirt. But the Italian hero did not much appreciate his French aide-de-camp, who came back to France and wrote an account of his expedition. Maxime du Camp suffered a sort of transformation after it; he suddenly became, from a man of imagination, a man of numbers, of statistics, an economist. He began to collect materials with as much care as a member of some “social congress.” Taking Paris for the subject of his study, he published a work under the somewhat extraordinary title of ‘Paris, its Organs, its Functions, its Life in the second half of the Eighteenth Century.’ In six big volumes he described what may be called the anatomy of the capital of France, and there is no doubt that this work, while it now possesses great interest for all the administrators of great cities, will hereafter be a very curious historical document.

Since the war Maxime du Camp has published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* a series of articles on the Commune, and he has now republished a part of them under the singular title ‘The Convulsions of Paris.’ After having described Paris in its normal state, such as it appears to the eye in regular times, M. du Camp has had occasion to see it in what he calls a “convulsion”; he has proceeded like the physiologist who studies an organ first in its normal condition, then in pathological states. Before

the Commune, during the Commune, was it not always the same Paris, the same million-headed hydra? The work of years, of centuries, can be almost undone in a few hours. I remember how different Paris was from itself even on the 7th of September, three days after the revolution which followed the capitulation of Sedan. The police had almost vanished; the various ministries were in the hands of the members of the so-called Government of National Defence, but the new ministers felt themselves strangers in the palaces which had been abandoned to them; there was no authority left; everybody could go in and out. Paris was arming; bands of men were seen on the boulevards with guns on their shoulders; the streets were already dirty and great heaps of rubbish were seen before every door. The railway stations were crowded to suffocation; the wine-shops were full of working-men, of soldiers, of *moblots*. Paris smelt of wine. Bands of men, women, and children were going to the Place de la Concorde, and left great crowns of “immortelles” before the gigantic statue of Strasbourg. The Hôtel de Ville, which had become the seat of the Government, was a pandemonium. General Trochu was meditating on his “plan” while the lawyers of the Government (almost all its members were lawyers) quarrelled among themselves, or addressed the deputations which came every half-hour and expressed the wishes of “the people.” But Paris on the eve of the siege was nothing to Paris on the eve of the Commune, or to Paris after the Commune; there was a gradation of horrors which culminated in the terrible eight days’ war in the streets from house to house, in the wholesale massacre of the hostages, in the murders in the prisons. Alas! this is all forgotten. If it were not for the ruins of a few palaces, who would remember the Commune? Paris is gay, it is as brilliant as in its most brilliant days; it adds to its illumination by gas every night the new electrical illumination; the Place de l’Opéra seems in the purple and vivid light of the new invention like some fantastic decoration. The long galleries and the high towers of the Exhibition Palace are filled with the treasures of the whole world. The ruins themselves, with the rosy tints left by the petroleum, softened and rounded by time, adorn the magnificent capital. Was not Rome sacked eight times, and Rome is still admirable.

Maxime du Camp’s book produces a singular effect on the mind. We do not like to hear so much truth. Go to that great banker, who lives in a palace and who enjoys universal consideration, and whisper in his ear that some thirty years ago he was engaged in a very mean transaction, that he had much difficulty then in saving his honor and disentangling himself from the consequences of his error; he will not believe you. Tell the old general, covered with wounds, that on such a day, in such a year, in such an affair, he was not a hero, that he acted like a coward; he will not believe you. What can be more horrible to the sinner than the truth? And still “the truth shall save thee.” Maxime du Camp has said nothing except what was founded on the most authentic documents; he has patiently consulted all the papers of the police, of the *mairies*, of the councils of war. “I have told nothing but the truth, but I have not told the whole truth. It is at times so particularly monstrous, it reveals such acts of ferocity, of debauchery, of horrible depravity, that in many cases I have been silent out of respect for myself and respect for my readers. All the menagerie of bad passions had broken its cage during the Commune. . . . It cannot be said that the Commune was hypocritical; it was very frank. It was like a prostitute without any shame.” It cannot be said that such a work as ‘The Convulsions of Paris’ has any political character; it cannot be invoked against any particular form of government, as the Commune was in reality the absence of government, the absence of law, the absence of any constitutional, administrative, or judicial guarantees. It was the reign of brute force; still it shows how easily a small number of men can govern a great capital by terror and by corruption. We cannot, or at least we ought not to, forget that for two months force reigned supreme in Paris. The Commune had an artillery of more than a thousand guns; it had twenty legions, composed of 254 battalions; the army counted from 140,000 to 150,000 men; out of this number we may say that only 25,000 men really fought, but the others received their pay of one and a half francs a day, and they were in consequence real accomplices of the Commune. This number of 150,000, which represents the paid army of the Commune, is not much inferior to the number of the registered electors of Paris.

The time may come when some writer, in order to please or flatter the electors of Paris, will try to describe a theoretical Commune, to surround it with the halo of some socialist doctrine. I read very attentively at the time all the proclamations of the Commune, of the Committee of the National Guard, the articles of the official *Moniteur* of the Commune, and I confess that I could never arrive at any result as to the ideas and

principles which guided the leaders of this popular movement. I came to the conclusion that it was a physiological movement, the mere outburst of animal passions which were left unrestrained. There was no patriotism mixed up with it, as the Communist leaders showed themselves remarkably humble before the Prussian commanders; they hated the "Versaillais" much more than the Germans, because the Versaillais were determined to shorten their orgies. The Communists professed to be Republicans, and tried to represent the Republic as threatened by the royalist Chamber of Versailles; but they must have known that M. Thiers had no intention of establishing a monarchy. The most important Republican leaders were in Versailles, on the side of Thiers. Gambetta alone had gone to San Sebastian in Spain during the civil war, under pretext of ill-health.

Even now it is difficult, however, to say with any exactitude how much political considerations entered into the beginning of the Communist movement. Once begun, it outgrew the domain of politics; it became a mere socialist agitation. Its heroes were of a two-fold kind—some were men without any culture, mere brutes; the others were well-educated men who for some reason or other had been unable to make their way in the world—men in a state of revolt against society. More than half the members of the Commune were taken at random from what has been called in England the "residuum"; but these men became the instruments of a few educated and corrupt individuals, such as Pascal Groussset and Raoul Rigault. This Raoul Rigault is thus described by Du Camp:

"He was a heavy boy, with uncouth hair and beard, solid shoulders, short legs; near-sighted, with a firm eye, an impudent nose, a sensual mouth; fond of good wine; talking, screaming, gesticulating, snuffing tobacco between two phrases, astonishing the young men by his talk, almost famous in the Quartier des Ecoles. Half-student, half-journalist, repeating as sublime truths the stupidities picked up in the *Ami du peuple* [the paper of Marat] and in the *Père Duchêne*, he seemed strong because he was rude, energetic because he was cruel, intelligent because he was an audacious talker. He was the chief of a small group which recognized but one master, the man whom they familiarly called 'le sieur' Blanqui. Blanqui knew Rigault well, and said of him: 'As a man he is a mere boy, but he is a first-rate policeman.' It was true; Rigault had the genius of the police, and if he had lived he would probably have become a formidable detective—as old poachers become the best game-keepers. He had studied all the agents of the prefecture of police; he knew who belonged to the division 'des mœurs,' who to the division of 'sûreté'; to the 'furnished apartments,' to the 'research brigade.' He feared mostly those of the 'contrôle,' and he played tricks on the men of Lagrange, who was charged with the political service of the prefecture of police. His joy was to follow them, to make their acquaintance, to take them to some beer-shop, and to leave them completely drunk."

Rigault had made pupils, he had formed a sort of counter-police. He never spoke of liberty, of equality, of fraternity. Even during the Empire he said, "When we shall be masters, . . . when we shall be in power." After the 4th September he took the place of his pet enemy, Lagrange. The siege was a preparation for him. He spoke little of Bismarck, of the Germans. He spoke of Marat. He became furious at the sight of a church or a priest. He never said the "Rue Saint-Hyacinthe-Saint-Michel." He said "Hya-Michel." He did not believe in saints. On the 18th of March he entered the Prefecture of Police—his day had come. He made himself "procureur," that is, "public accuser," of the Commune. His dream was to imitate the Hébert of the first Revolution. The dream of the ferocious Ferré (who executed the hostages) was to imitate Rigault. Crime must have models, like virtue. Ferré, a miserable, sickly man, with ecstatic eyes, small, ridiculous, looked with envy and a admiration on Rigault, who was robust, who drank copiously (the account of Rigault's table during the Commune amounted to about 200 francs a day). Ferré and Rigault are good types of the Commune. Ferré represents the "residuum," Rigault the outcast of society—the vain and lazy student who will not patiently make a career, and who prefers to prey upon society.

"It cannot be said," writes Maxime du Camp, "that Raoul Rigault and Ferré were the men of the Commune. The Commune had no men—it had spectres, phantoms lost in the clouds of the past, whom the instinct of imitation led to violence, and who could formulate no new idea. But they were the expression of the Commune. They represented its coarseness, its vanity, its cruelty, its ignorance, its debauchery. These two *cabotins* [*cabotin* is the word applied to a contemptible actor] did incalculable harm by inciting constantly the mass of dreamers to excessive measures."

How is it possible to give an account of a book like this book on the 'Convulsions of Paris'? The whole interest of it lies in its infinite details. Du Camp devotes this first volume to the prisons of Paris and to the prison-life during the terrible days which followed the 18th of March.

The Circles of Dante cannot be more infernal than these prisons, to which the prisoners were taken arbitrarily, and where they enjoyed none of the prerogatives which attend a prisoner in all civilized countries. M. du Camp takes one prison after the other—the famous "Dépôt," near the Prefecture, where the Archbishop of Paris and M. Bonjean were first taken, the Maison de Justice, the Sainte-Lazare, the Sainte-Pélagie, the "Santé," Mazas, the Grande-Roquette. I have gone again through all the stations of Calvary. I can only advise a few to read this account of what the depravity of man can do when it is not only unbridled, but when it becomes the law itself. There are days in history when the murderer becomes the judge. The Commune was one of those evil days. The memory of it will never be lost. It will remain in history like a mark of infamy—one of those dates which continue to shine when all else has become vague and misty, like the date of St. Bartholomew, like the days of 1793.

Correspondence.

PRESIDENT ELIOT'S CONSISTENCY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In your last issue a correspondent signing himself C. K., and writing from Ann Arbor, asserts that "a very interesting and suggestive change" has come over my mind on the subject of the method adopted by the University of Michigan in 1870 of admitting students, without examination, on certificates from the authorities of approved schools. His evidence of this change of opinion on my part is, that in the last number of the *North American Review* I have commended to the attention of American teachers the examinations conducted by the "Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board," whereas in 1874 I expressed, in my annual report, my disbelief in the method adopted by the University of Michigan.

The unwary reader would naturally infer that there is a close resemblance between the Ann Arbor method and the Oxford and Cambridge method, so that it must be inconsistent to condemn the one and praise the other. Indeed, C. K. virtually affirms that the two systems are "identical in spirit and purpose, and almost identical in form." He even implies that the University of Michigan anticipated by three years the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in the adoption of the policy of examining schools, and then admitting pupils of these schools to the University without examination. Now, the fact is, that the English method bears no resemblance whatever to the Michigan method, but, on the contrary, has a wholly different procedure and a diametrically opposite tendency.

The English Board conducts actual examinations, both written and oral, on specific subjects, through competent examiners of its own choice; and retains absolute control of these examinations in every respect. It examines persons, not programmes; pupils, not teachers; and it takes no account of school testimonials or diplomas. The Board holds examinations of two sorts: 1, examinations of schools—that is, of the pupils of any school upon their school work; 2, examinations of individuals for certificates which give exemption from the entrance or matriculation examinations of the colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, from the first examinations in the University course at Oxford and Cambridge, from the preliminary examinations of the College of Surgeons, the Institute of Architects, the Council of Medical Education, and the Incorporated Law Society, and from portions of the examinations prescribed for first appointments in the army, and for admission to the Military Academy at Woolwich. The examinations of schools are held at the schools, upon request of the school desiring to be examined, and exclusively for its benefit and at its expense; and these examinations have, in themselves, no effect whatever to admit pupils of the examined schools to the Universities, either with or without testimonials or diplomas given by the schools. The examinations of individuals for the Board's certificates cover all the subjects included in the various examinations from which the certificates give exemption; they are conducted simultaneously at numerous places in England with the precision, fairness, and publicity which characterize all the English university examinations; every candidate must pay, at least two months in advance, a fee of £2; the papers set are annually published, as are also the names of all the persons who receive certificates, with the subjects in which they respectively passed and the schools from which they came. [See the "Regulations of the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board for the year 1878.

Pries 67." The Annual Report of the Board (the first in 1874). The Annual List of Candidates who obtained certificates (the first in July, 1874). Price 67. The "Papers set in the Examination for Certificates, July, 1876. Price 1s." These publications can be obtained through Macmillan & Co., New York City.]

In sharp contrast with this admirable system is the method of the University of Michigan as described in its official publications:

"A committee of the Faculty will visit, once a year, any public high-school in Michigan, on request of its School Board, and report its condition to the Faculty. If the Faculty shall be satisfied, from such report, that the school is taught by competent instructors, and is furnishing a good preparation for any one or more of our regular courses, then the graduates from such preparatory course or courses will be admitted to the freshman class of the University without examination. . . ."—*Catalogue for 1876-77*, p. 36.

The President of the University, in his report for the year ending June 30, 1876, p. 6, speaks of this method as "the plan of receiving students from certain approved high-schools on diploma and without examination by us." The Oxford and Cambridge system is, on the one hand, an emphatic assertion, and, on the other, a striking recognition, of the supremacy of the universities over the institutions of secondary education; the Michigan method is a partial surrender of the authority of the university. The one is a strict, precise, and comprehensive system of publicly examining individuals in specified subjects; the other a lax, equivocal method of visiting schools once a year. The natural tendency of the one is to hold the secondary institutions up, of the other to let the university down. The two plans are so utterly different that it is hard to imagine how any one could approve both. He who admires the one must almost necessarily disapprove the other.

I am obliged to your correspondent for procuring for me, through your courtesy, this opportunity of again expressing my opinion—an opinion which time has only strengthened—that the Michigan method is an innovation of injurious tendency, and of again inviting public attention to the service which the two great English universities are rendering to English education through the action of their combined "Schools Examination Board."

Your obedient servant,

CHARLES W. ELIOT.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., March 25, 1878.

THE FINANCIAL FUTURE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Silver dollars having now become an unlimited legal tender, it will be interesting to consider the probable results. To simplify the question, let us assume that the Resumption Act will not be repealed, and that silver certificates, if issued at all by the Treasury, will be issued only in exchange for actual deposits of coined dollars, with perhaps a margin of credit similar to that now provided for in the issue of gold certificates.

(1) At present there are practically no silver dollars in circulation, excepting trade-dollars, which are not a legal tender, and some few very old or very new coins, which need not be taken into account. As specie payments are not yet authorized, the Secretary of the Treasury has no right to pay out silver dollars in exchange for greenbacks. To pay them out for the purchase of silver bullion would be unwise and unwarrantable: first, because a gold dollar, which will now pay no more debt than a silver dollar, will purchase one-tenth more silver bullion than the latter; and, secondly, because the silver dollars so paid out would at once return to the Treasury through the Custom-House, thereby diminishing to that extent the revenue of the Government, and its ability to continue the payment of interest on its bonds in gold. Apparently, therefore, the only proper course for the Secretary of the Treasury to pursue is to hoard the silver dollars in the Treasury as fast as they are coined.

(2) On the first of January, 1879, greenbacks will be payable in coin, and by that time there will probably be, say, \$30,000,000 of silver dollars available for their redemption. Of course, from that date all who have duties to pay at the Custom-House will obtain the coin for that purpose at par, in exchange for greenbacks; and as it is not likely that the balance of trade will turn against us so rapidly as to allow these silver dollars to be exported without loss, they will probably, for some months at least, continue to accumulate in the principal centres of trade, being too cumbersome for general circulation. Even the banks will not want to be encumbered with them, but will prefer to keep them on deposit in the Treasury, using greenbacks and silver certificates in their place.

(3) We shall thus have in circulation at least four different kinds of

money, so-called, viz.: silver, silver certificates, greenbacks, and national bank notes, besides subsidiary silver coin. Gold will continue to be used as merchandise for purposes of export, but with an increased premium, and as all gold revenue will cease before many months, both the principal and interest of bonds must be paid in silver. So long as the balance of trade does not call for the export of silver coin, the above four kinds of money must apparently continue to circulate side by side, with continually increasing volume, until their depreciation becomes so great as to call for the export of silver coin. Any considerable advance or upward tendency in the price of silver bullion would, of course, hasten this result; but sooner or later it must come, and the longer it is delayed the more dangerous it will be.

(4) In the meantime it certainly seems probable that a period of inflation is close at hand. With our peculiar financial organization, and the sanguine and speculative temperament of our people, this continued plethora of circulating medium, especially when rendered apparently safe by the resumption of specie payments, must inevitably produce its usual effects. We must remember, however, that there has been as yet no real adjustment of the currency, no real equilibrium established between coin and paper; and if there is any virtue in statistics, and any wisdom to be drawn from past experience, the amount of paper money now in circulation is far beyond what can be maintained at par with specie under the pressure of an adverse balance of trade. How much more will this be the case when it is swelled by the issue of silver certificates and by the increase of bank credit which is sure to follow!

Perhaps, therefore, the best thing that can happen for us, though by no means the most agreeable, is that gold should rise gradually to a premium of ten per cent., and be carried off to Europe, that our bonds should be steadily returned upon our hands, thus absorbing our idle capital, and that our people, still so much impoverished by past extravagance, should be kept at work earning and saving money, and liquidating their foreign and domestic debts, without an opportunity of renewing the brilliant career of folly and waste which followed upon the close of the war. In that case, specie payment, at least in silver, may be not only resumed, but maintained, and the reign of irredeemable paper be ended, let us hope, for ever.

J. S. R.

[The danger is, however, that silver not having brought back the happy days, the pressure for "fiat-money" would become stronger than ever. Experience has shown that all attempts to satisfy popular delusions in financial legislation have never ceased till the bottom was reached—that is, until the *reductio ad absurdum* had been performed, so that the most ignorant man in the community could understand it—until, for example, it took \$100 or \$1,000 to buy a quart of peanuts. Salvation through irredeemable paper money or any other kind of inflation is possible and has been achieved only where, as now in France, the management of the currency has been left in skilled hands. If the French people had taken hold of the financial problem after 1870, under the pressure of their burdens, and every voter had converted himself into a minister of finance, the bottom would have dropped out of French credit long ago. Our chance of escape lies in the possibility of rescuing our currency from the demagogues before the conservative and patriotic spirit which the war infused into our finance has been exhausted, and the final rush for the bridge begins. What we have to fear is the disgust which will be excited when it is discovered that silver, like gold, is "rich man's money"—that is, can only be procured for labor or goods. If this should not be guarded against, specie payments would not be maintained in silver any more than in gold.—ED. NATION.]

ACCEPTING THE SITUATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I am the editor of a newspaper not "prominent" outside the State in which it is published. In its columns I have earnestly opposed all legislation intended to give us any other than a gold standard for our currency, not with the expectation that I could thereby exert influence at Washington, but with a view to preserving a sound public sentiment among the constituents of the Senator and Representative from this State who have firmly opposed all such legislation; yet, now that the deed is done, I feel some disposition to acquiesce and make the best of a bad busi-

ness, which disposition your article in the last *Nation* does not entirely remove.

The case appears to me thus: The original Bland Bill proposed to give, at once, a new meaning to the word "dollar," and thereby alter and impair every contract made before that date requiring the payment of "dollars." Its certain effect would have been to give to this country a single currency of silver, while the object of the bill—which was to enable public and private debtors to escape legally the payment of from eight to ten per cent. of their debts—was one of undisguised dishonesty. The Senate amendments only postponed the time when these necessary results would ensue, and made the descent a gradual instead of an abrupt one. The passage of the bill in either form made of this a rascal nation, naturally and properly injured our credit, and imposed on this and the next succeeding generation the burden of interest-payments one-third larger than we need have borne, for the sake of enabling some generation yet unborn to escape the payment of one-tenth of the principal of a debt the interest on which, at six per cent., will amount to more than its principal long before such final payment.

Yet, as one of the forty millions of rascals created by this act, I feel that there is a necessity that we shall still live, if for no better reason than that we may repent, and I am therefore disposed to accept the new definition of the word "dollar," and adapt business to the new basis, and also to try to prevent a still lower descent in the scale by opposing paper inflation. It will not take the world long to comprehend that the value expressed by the word "dollar," in the United States, is that measured by the silver five-franc piece, and such foreign trade as we have will be conducted on that basis. Whatever may be finally the purchasing power of that quantity of silver will be the purchasing power of the American dollar. No one claims, I believe, that it will not have some intrinsic value always. Is it not, then, the part of wisdom and prudence to join hands now with those of the silver advocates whom we believe honest but mistaken, in defeating the ultimate purpose of a majority of the silver agitators—the making of the silver legislation but the entering wedge for paper-money inflation?

I write under the conviction that the realization of all the results threatened by the original Bland Bill is only a question of time under the operation of the bill as it passed the Senate. If I am mistaken in this, I am, of course, wrong in my conclusions, but I see no reason to hope that I am mistaken. Many leading New York papers have urged bankers and other business men to put their business on a gold basis, but a careful scanning of their news-columns fails to show me that any concerted movement in that direction has taken place or is likely to take place. If it is not done in New York, it will not be done anywhere. There appears to be a practical submission among business men such as you censure newspapers for giving in words; but if they acquiesce and adapt themselves to the situation, of what value will lamentation and warning by the newspapers be? I put these questions in all earnestness, for I am sure that if you can point out even a "fighting chance" to save the country from the effects of the Bland Bill, the papers which have consistently and intelligently opposed it will be glad enough to continue to attack it; but if those results are as inevitable as they appear to be to me, I can see no good that can come from further agitation of the subject, and much positive harm to business, which it is our duty to avert if we honestly can.

Yours respectfully,

W. T. CROASDALE.

WILMINGTON, DEL., March 18, 1878.

[If we knew exactly what Mr. Croasdale meant by "joining hands" with the honest portion of the silver agitators, we could better answer his questions. Our counsel to preachers is to preach the value of a stable standard of value, and try to get dealers in money and merchandise to help the preaching by using in their contracts the most stable standard known. There is to this, of course, the usual objection to all preaching—that it will produce no effect at all, or none for a very long time. But what other way is there, in our state of society, of meeting a widespread popular delusion on any subject? The extreme silver-men cannot be stopped or discouraged by agreeing or pretending to agree with them. On the contrary, every concession tempts them into fresh excesses. We believe their leading man, Senator Jones, who was a staunch opponent of paper inflation in 1875, is now in favor of "fiat-money"—that is, money composed of some worthless material, with a Government stamp on it. What these men are driving at is undoubtedly the repudiation of all debts, public and private, by the total breakdown of the cur-

rency, so that the country may "make a fresh start," free from all liabilities. It is a great mistake, to our mind, to suppose that agreeing to go part of the way with them, or pretending to think that their schemes ought to have a fair trial, will divert them in the least from their ultimate design. Nor is there any way under heaven of felling them except by appealing to the honor and intelligence of the American people, through the press and the platform. It may be that the crisis is such that even this resource will fail us. But as long as there is even a hope of success we are bound to try it. If by "joining hands" or remaining silent we can raise the price of silver, by all means let us do it. But our correspondent does not suppose that silver would rise one penny per ounce because all the newspapers praised silver as currency, or that anybody fit to conduct business would use one cent more of it in his business, in order to give the Bland Bill a fair trial. We must all rid our heads of the notion that this matter is any longer within the reach of sentiment of any kind, or that the men who are now fixing the price of bullion are moved by dithyrambs about the "fathers' dollar" or Abraham's shekels. They dispose of whole yards of Cincinnati and Chicago rhetoric by a few figures on a broker's little pad. —*ER. NATION.*]

Notes.

A VERY competent artist, Mr. S. A. Schoff, of Newtonville, Mass., proposes to make a line engraving from the crayon portrait of Emerson by Rowse. This portrait is not only one of Rowse's best works, but by far the finest of Mr. Emerson, and one of which the poet Clough wrote in 1859: "It is really, I think, without any question, the best portrait of any living and known-to-me man that I have ever seen." There will be five hundred artist proofs, and no more, at ten dollars each, and the work will be begun as soon as one hundred names are obtained. A year will be required for its completion. Subscriptions may be sent to Doll & Richards, 2 Park Street, Boston.—Prof. W. S. Tyler's article in the March *New Englander* on "The Teaching of Christ respecting the Duration of Future Punishment" is to be republished by A. D. F. Randolph & Co.—The Religious Newspaper Agency, 21 Barclay Street, will shortly issue 'The Complete Preacher,' a volume of thirty-two sermons by German, English, French, and American preachers of note.—Sheldon & Co. have in press a story of army life in America by Custer's biographer, Capt. Frederick Whittaker.—R. Worthington, 750 Broadway, has bought out the stock, plates, etc., of Lovell, Adam, Wesson & Co., Lovell Printing and Publishing Co., and Warwick & Co., and henceforth adds their publications to his lists.—Mr. Lawrence Buckley Thomas, 54 McCulloh Street, Baltimore, author of 'Genealogical Notes on the Thomas Family of Maryland,' has abandoned his intention of printing an elaborate supplement to this work, and adopts the novel plan of issuing a supplement of corrections and additions, with autographic fac-similes, by the papyrograph process. One hundred copies need to be subscribed for, at \$1 10 each, postage included.—We have to record the untimely death last week of Prof. Charles Frederick Hartt, of Cornell University, in charge of the Brazilian Geological Survey. He was a native of Fredericton, N. B., where he was born in 1819; but his geological tastes were first exhibited in Nova Scotia. He became in 1862-65 a student under Agassiz, and accompanied him in his expedition to Brazil as first assistant-geologist. This determined his future connection with the Empire. His subsequent observations in the Amazon valley led him to differ from Agassiz as to the evidence of glacial action in that region. Prof. Hartt was also an ardent student of the Indian languages, and made a folk-lore collection of no little value. His work on the 'Geology and Physical Geography of Brazil' appeared in 1870. He died at Rio of yellow fever.—A chronological list of the books illustrated by Cruikshank is given in the London *Bookseller* of March 2. Descriptive notes of much interest are added in each case. In 1859 Cruikshank designed a frontispiece to Hotten's edition of the 'Biglow Papers'; in 1853 he illustrated 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' for English, French, and Welsh editions, of which the last is said to have a large sale still.—The November-December number of the *Library Journal*, belated for good reasons, contains the papers read at the English Library Conference. The proceedings will follow in the next number. Most striking among these papers is Mr. Henry Stevens's irreproachable plan of photo-bibliography, illustrated by

fac-similes of several curious title-pages. This idea deserves to bear fruit.—We correctly stated last week Governor Prescott's majority in New Hampshire, but, in comparing the total vote of 1877 and 1878, mistook some partial returns for complete ones, and so reported a falling off of sixteen thousand. In fact, it was less than a hundred.

The second of the new series of Harvard College Library bulletins is even better than the first. Dr. Lodge concludes his note on American history. Mr. Winsor makes one on Puritans and Separatists, which will serve as a preface to Dr. Lodge's. Prof. Dunbar contributes a bibliographical sketch, of present interest, on gold and silver. Dr. Abbot comments on Martini's *Pugio fidei adversus Judæos*, and the *Hierobotanicon* of Olof Celsius, and pours forth a wealth of references apropos of Canon Farrar's *Eternal Hope*. The longest note, however, is Dr. Emerton's "Authorities for the History of the Empire and the Papacy, 1056-1122," to which he has added a short but good list of books which would be of service to beginners in German. The last two articles, "Rarities of the Summer Collection" (A-Autographs) and list of the principal books relating to the life and works of Michelangelo, with long and valuable and interesting notes by Mr. Norton, will be continued in future numbers—many future numbers we hope—and when finished will be issued separately in a small edition. We have also before us the Catalogue of the Public Library of the City of Taunton, Mass., a collection of 1,200 numbers made in the past dozen years, and so exclusively English that we have in a cursory examination found but three works in as many modern foreign languages; and though it contains a *Dictionary of the Chinook Jargon*, it has neither a French, a German, a Spanish, nor an Italian dictionary. The catalogue is further distinguished by being printed on Manila paper, after the latest library economy, and the effect on the eye is not unpleasant. As a substitute for cross-references there is a classified index in addition to the authors' catalogue.

—One must be fastidious who cannot find something to interest him in the April *Atlantic*. In Mr. Bishop's "Detmold" the foreshadowed and foreseen comes duly to pass, leaving the next instalment to be awaited with rather more than the usual impatience. Mr. James's "Italy Revisited" falls a little short of its purpose to impress the reader with the modernization and materialization of Italy; at least the "Tuscan shrines fed with the Pennsylvanian fluid" (is Mr. James sure that the petroleum was not produced on the peninsula?), the Roman horse-cars, and a picturesque Communist, seem but superficial marks of a change which is really profound. But the descriptive portions of this paper, which show us Turin, Genoa, Spezia, Lerici, are in Mr. James's proper manner, and that is to say enough both by way of explanation and of praise. The copious extracts from Thoreau's journal, for the same month in many years, called "April Days," have a prime value as the field-notes of a naturalist in the latitude of Concord; their poetic value is secondary, but still not insignificant; and their philosophy we shall presume to rate third, though we make our only quotation from it:

"April 4, 1839. The atmosphere of morning gives a healthy hue to our prospects. Disease is a sluggard that overtakes, never encounters us. We have the start each day, and may fairly distance him before the dew is off; but if we recline in the bowers of noon, he will, after all, come up with us. The morning dew breeds no cold. We enjoy a diurnal reprieve in the beginning of each day's creation. In the morning we do not believe in expediency; we will start afresh, and have no patching, no temporary fixtures. In the afternoon man has an interest in the past; his eye is divided, and he sees indifferently well either way."

"Lincoln's Triumph in 1864" is the late Gideon Welles's title to a fresh discourse on the meanness and self-seeking of Chase, the readiness of Grant to appropriate the credit belonging to others (as in the case of the capture of Wilmington—"an Administration rather than a military measure"), and the resignation of Postmaster-General Blair at Lincoln's request, in accounting for which Mr. Stanton's previous character for integrity is assailed. One can imagine a ghostly session of Mr. Lincoln's cabinet, in which Mr. Welles would sigh for the refuge of a monitor. We can barely allude to Mr. Sedgwick's "The Lobby: its Cause and Cure." Its main points are that the lobby is a necessity, that it is now an irresponsible bar, that the occasion for it should be diminished by removing "claims" from Congress to the courts, and that its procedure before committees should be regulated by law.

—Of *Harper's* and *Lippincott's* for April it is to be said that they are both good numbers, without having any very salient articles. In *Harper's* Mr. Barnard leads off with an article on "The American Clyde," which contrasts graphically and instructively the Scottish iron-ship industry with its rival on the Delaware; and with the aid of numerous

illustrations succeeds in giving a fair idea of the construction of a great steamship. Another paper on naval architecture, by Mr. W. L. Alden, touches the other end of the scale, for it treats of "The Perfect Canoe," meaning the pleasure-craft invented and made famous by Mr. John MacGregor. Mr. Alden humorously sets forth the merits and defects of the *Rob Roy*, *Nautibus*, and *Herald* varieties, and concludes by introducing a new model, first to take the water this season, and styled the *Shadow*, which he confidently ranks above them all. Views and diagrams make his descriptions clear, and he must be considered a benefactor if he succeeds in making two canoes paddle where one paddled before; for a more independent and healthful mode of recreation and travel has yet to be devised. One may read about Siena in *Harper's*, with the help of excellent designs after photographs, or about the Italian lakes, as Mr. R. A. McLeod describes them in *Lippincott's*, assisted by fewer and inferior cuts. In the latter magazine are also to be found "Recollections of Edward L. Davenport," by Mr. H. P. Goddard, who eulogizes the man as much as the actor, and an essay on "Home Harmonies," by Mr. Austen Pearce, who writes sensibly, as we conceive, if somewhat above the popular comprehension, on the cultivation of parlor music, with special regard to the combination of stringed instruments with the piano.

—The first part of Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* has made its appearance (New York: Macmillan & Co.), bringing down the subject from A to Ballad. In 1764 J. J. Rousseau published his *Dictionnaire de Musique*, which for many years remained the standard work of reference on its subject. Nothing could give one a better idea of the immense progress made in the art and science of music since that date than a comparison of these two works. The last hundred years have in fact formed the most important period in all the history of music, and in consequence Rousseau's *Dictionnaire*, though in some respects still unsurpassed, is yet on the whole thoroughly antiquated, and of more value to the historian and the critic than to the amateur in search of practical information. Of more recent works Dommer's *Musikalisches Lexicon* has long held the first place for accuracy and completeness, although it has its faults, consisting chiefly in a want of literary perspective, and a diffuse style common in German works of this kind, a tendency to empty metaphysico-æsthetic talk, and the omission of all biographical notices. The exhaustive *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, by M. Fétis, on the other hand, is incomplete as a work of reference because limited to biographical notices. In the English language the only general musical dictionary we are acquainted with is Moore's *Encyclopædia of Music*, a poor, uncritical American compilation, which can have been tolerated so long only because nothing better was in the field. About two years ago a Berlin publisher began to issue the parts of Mendel's very comprehensive *Musikalisches Conversations-Lexicon*, and this admirable work may have suggested to Mr. Grove the idea of issuing a similar dictionary in English, with the aim of giving information on "musical history and biography, on the science and practice of composition, and the nature, construction, and use of musical instruments, explanations of musical terms, and general information on modern music since the fifteenth century." *Abbreviations, Académie de Musique, Accompaniment, Æolian Harp, Albion, Adagio, Amati, American Organ, Anthem, Auber, Bach, Bachelor* (of music), are a few of the subjects, chosen at random, that will illustrate the scope and variety of this work, which, if the excellence of the first number is sustained throughout, may be safely placed on the same shelf with the new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. And we have no doubt that such will be the case, as Mr. Grove has secured the services of the most eminent English, and some foreign, musicians, the list of contributors including such names as Benedict, Dannreuther, F. Hiller, F. Hueffer, John Hullah, Pauer, Prout, Sullivan, etc.; and there seems to be such a division of labor as will ensure each subject the best treatment.

—We have found this first part so interesting, so well written and free from pedantry, that we have read it through from beginning to end, omitting only the notices of the minor executive musicians, to whom altogether too much space is devoted. Very few people nowadays care to know much about the lives of trumpeters and flute-players of former times, and the few that do may go to Fétis for information. By omitting these notices more space might be reserved for the eminent composers. The article on *Bach* is good as far as it goes, but it scarcely points out with sufficient clearness and detail wherein consists that immense influence of his which induced Schumann to assert that to him "music owes almost as great a debt as a religion owes to its founder." Nor are the proportions of space always observed. *Arne* gets three, *Auber* three,

Bagpipe four, and *Bach* only nine columns! There are also some serious omissions. *Acoustics* is passed over, although that word would have been the proper place for giving an account of the important investigations of Helmholtz; and *Esthetics* should have been introduced, if only for the purpose of giving a list of works on the musical branch of that science. We also miss the familiar name of Adam de la Halle. It is true, the Dictionary only pretends to go back to 1450, but St. Ambrose (600 A.D.) is introduced in his place, and if we are to miss the names of Gregory, Huebaldus, Franco von Köln, Marchettus, and others, just because they lived before that date, the Dictionary will lose much in value. The prominent names before Dufay could all be disposed of in half-a-dozen columns, and it would be better, as we have suggested, to leave out instead some of the minor musicians of more recent times. We must finally protest against the use, in a standard book like this, of the barbarous, old-fashioned habit of calling notes crotchets, quavers, semiquavers, etc. Why not say quarter-notes, eighth-notes, etc., which is much more simple and intelligible, and does not lead to such monstrosities of nomenclature as demi-demisemiquaver? In mediæval times there used to be a clef for almost every note of the scale. We have now happily reduced them to three or four, and the aim of all rational musicians ought to be to simplify musical notation and language in all respects as much as possible. The second part of the Dictionary is to appear April 1.

—Three pamphlets on tree-planting may here receive a seasonable notice. The first, reprinted from the Twenty-fifth Report of the Massachusetts Board of Agriculture, is by C. S. Sargent, Director of the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, and is supplementary to a former paper on the subject, to which we once called attention. In designating the trees from which planters on the barren soil and under the severe climate of New England must make their selection for profitable sylviculture, the white ash and the European larch were put foremost, and next to these hickories, sugar maple, and white oak. The trees now recommended as worthy of trial, on economical considerations alone, are the red or Norway pine, wild black cherry, American cork elm, and ailanthus. The cherry, to be of any account, would need a deep soil, such as could seldom be spared for it in New England, and Mr. Sargent does not omit to mention the great fondness of the tent caterpillar for its foliage. We may venture to predict that where these trees are plentifully planted apples will be scarce. As to the ailanthus, although in ill odor as an ornamental tree in streets and near dwellings, its growth even in poorest soils is so rapid, and its wood is so valuable for cabinet-work, that it may well be recommended for sylviculture, especially upon sand-dunes. The result of a fifty-seven years' trial in converting worn-out pasture into forest is given in detail at the close of the article. It has yielded within a small fraction of seven per cent. per annum, with the prospect of continuance, as the land is still well covered.

—'Economic Tree-Planting,' by the Hon. B. G. Northrop, from the Report of the Connecticut State Board of Agriculture, 1877-8, is a more general dissertation on the subject—its advantages, methods, influence upon rainfall and summer state of streams, choice of trees to plant, etc. Its best practical point is that which beseeches the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad to plant out "the sand-blow" between North Haven and Wallingford, now a literal eye-sore to travellers and an injury to much otherwise valuable land, but which has actually been caused by the destruction of a natural forest between it and the sea. Some accompanying pages on the weeping willow and its planting show that Mr. Northrop is not well-up in the history of the tree; for he re-asserts that "there can be little doubt that the trees on which the captives of Israel hung their harps belonged to the species named *Salix Babylonica*," although "it is said now to be commoner in almost every country than in its native habitat near Babylon." Doubtless this is so; for the best of dendrologists, Karl Koch (as the *Nation* has already recorded), has already shown that the weeping willow is indigenous only in Japan or China, and never inhabited the valley of the Euphrates, at least in the days of the Captivity. It was a native poplar, doubtless, which the translators have made into a willow; and the legend that the willow grew with drooping branches after bearing the harps of the weeping Jews was fitted to this weeping Japanese variety, and Linnaeus was misled by it. We mention, finally, 'Facts and Information in relation to the Catalpa-Tree, its Value and Importance,' etc.—the long title of a pamphlet by E. E. Barney, of Dayton, Ohio. The capital fact is that fence-posts, set two feet in the ground seventy-five years ago, on being taken up were found to be perfectly sound; that President Harrison's picket-fence of catalpa wood was in good order after forty years' service, and the portions under ground

perfectly sound; all which is very wonderful for a fast-growing wood. Hence it is alleged that catalpa wood will be invaluable for railroad ties, and must be largely produced and used for this purpose in the Western States. Certainly it will be if these statements are borne out.

KITCHIN'S HISTORY OF FRANCE.*

"TWO or three thousand years hence, when civilization has passed on its western course, and when Europe is in the state in which we now see Asia Minor and Syria and Egypt, only two of her children will be remembered: one a sober, well-disposed good boy, the other a riotous, unmanageable spoilt child; and I am not sure that posterity will not like the naughty boy the best."

These words of Thiers afford the best text from which an Anglo-Saxon writer can criticise the history of France. Of the solid and rather uninteresting merits of the good boy, it is unnecessary to say much on either side the Atlantic. The constitutions he has made, the laws he has passed, the lands he has conquered, and the wealth he has acquired, are the ample reward and the overpowering evidence of his good sense and general good conduct. Of the faults of the spoilt child neither Englishmen nor Americans need at the present moment say anything. His follies and errors are visible to every man of common sense. They have brought their due punishment and are certain to receive more than their due blame. Our readers would not thank us for a superfluous homily on the political mistakes of the French nation. What is worth doing is to endeavor to see what are really the strong points in the character and career of Europe's bad boy. That any one bred up in the traditions of English history can ever fully sympathize with the real merits of a nation who have proved themselves weak where men of English race excel, and strong exactly where Englishmen are weak, is impossible; but a candid judge who wishes to see the truth may, even from the dry pages of Mr. Kitchen, catch some of those salient features in the history of France which, in the view of M. Thiers, would certainly gain for her the interest and, perhaps, the affection of posterity.

France, it may be urged in the first place, has never failed to display what is after all the greatest of all qualities both in men and in nations—superabundant vitality. The politician who, when asked at the end of the Reign of Terror what he had been doing, answered "*J'ai vécu*," said indirectly a good deal for his own force of character. To live when others fail in the struggle with death, is in some cases no mean achievement either for men or for nations. *J'ai vécu* might be the motto affixed to a history of France. Again and again the country has seemed at the last gasp, and again and again France has astonished the world by new life. The Hundred Years' War with England was the darkest of all the dark periods of French history, yet the Hundred Years' War laid the foundation for the greatness of the Monarchy. This struggle closed in the middle of the fifteenth century. Before the sixteenth had begun France had appeared in Italy as the greatest military power of the age. The political and religious contests of the Reformation tried the strength of France more severely than that of any other land except Germany. At the death of Henry III. a calm observer might well have believed that the total ruin of the country was at hand, yet under Henry IV. the country stood forth as the arbiter between the Powers of Europe. The contests of the Fronde wasted for a time, but certainly did not permanently damage, the force of the nation, and the brilliant grandeur of the court of Louis XIV. proved how great were the resources of the people who made him their idol. The policy, no doubt, of Louis led to immediate misery and future revolution; still, neither the fatal glories of Louis XIV. nor the equally fatal failures of his successor really ruined the country. The Revolution remains engraved on the memory of the world as a period of horror and bloodshed; but keen observers like Arthur Young perceived at once, what modern historians have gradually learnt, that the Revolution set free the latent forces of the country, and that France, even amidst confusion and civil war, was renewing her strength. The triumphs of Napoleon, though a curse to the world, were not achieved by the sons of a ruined or decrepit nation.

Nor is extraordinary vitality the characteristic only of the material side of the history of France. An exactly similar phenomenon may be traced in her literary annals. It was under Louis XV. that Voltaire made her the intellectual guide of Europe. If, however, we confine our attention to the material strength of France, it is impossible not to conclude that this extraordinary power of revival must itself depend on something strong in the foundations of French social life. A study of authors

* 'A History of France. By G. W. Kitchen, M.A.' Vol. II, 1453-1624; Vol. III, 1624-1793. New York: Macmillan & Co.

who, like Arthur Young in the last century or Mr. Hamerton in modern times, have known French life as it is seen not in Paris but in the country, suggests the conclusion that it is just in that portion of society which tourists never see and sensational novelists rarely describe that the secret of French strength is to be found. While revolutions displace dynasties and change forms of government at Paris, there is something in France which remains unchanged and almost unalterable. This something is the life of the small proprietors who inhabit the country, and the centre of their life is placed in the close bond of family union; for while the conventional notion of a Frenchman derived from novels is that he is a man given up to dissipation, and caring little for wife or children, the testimony of all persons whose evidence is worth noting, and certain features in French institutions, testify to the fact that family life has a strength in France which it has not either in England or America. Englishmen talk of their home and its sweetness, but their greatness as a nation has arisen from their readiness to leave their country for any land which attracts them by its riches. The so-called volatile and restless Frenchmen have never been able as a race to leave their homes in France. Englishmen and Americans, no doubt, make good husbands and fathers of families, but Englishmen and Americans have never felt it impossible to tolerate divorce. The wildest French Republicans would hesitate to introduce into France the divorce law of England or of Massachusetts. We all, again, are supposed at least to love our relations, but no member of the Anglo-Saxon race has ever cared to give to a "family council" the powers conceded to it with universal approval by the law of France. If to cling to your home and love your family be a virtue, the bad boy has, like other prodigals, always possessed this virtue in a higher degree than the respectable Anglo-Saxon youth who sings of sweet home and then leaves it for ever to found republics in the West and empires in the East.

France, again, has always admired intellectual eminence. Her trust in literary men has often been politically unfortunate, but bears witness to a noble trait of national character. Voltaire and Rousseau ruled the intellect and heart of France in the last century. Montesquieu's speculations influenced every member of the States-General. That assembly was filled with all the eminence of France. Books, it is true, had, in the opinion of De Tocqueville, ceased to sway the actions of ordinary Frenchmen; but his own career almost confutes his opinion. Printers' workmen, we are told, were interested in the publication of his "Democracy in America." Its appearance made its author an eminent writer, and therefore in France opened to him a political career. Universal suffrage is supposed to be hostile to the influence of intellectual capacity, but in 1848 the populace of France filled the Assembly with every man whose name added to the fame of the country. The parliaments of the Empire were for the most part deficient in men of distinction, but these assemblies represented the will of the Government, and not the wish of the people; and if the glories of French literature did not add lustre to the Imperial Senate or Chamber of Deputies, the cause lies in the absolute refusal of the men who adorned literature and science to support a government which had destroyed freedom. The Empire fell, and French veneration for talent again made itself felt. Thiers had originally gained notoriety as a journalist and his fame as an historian. During the whole of his long life he did not hold office for any length of time. Nevertheless, this representative of French talent and literary greatness was the man to whom France turned for guidance at the most desperate crisis of her fate. Political accident has made conservatism unusually influential in the constitution of the present Senate, yet the Senate numbered Lanfrey among its members and still contains Victor Hugo and Littré.

This admiration for talent, and especially for literary talent, has undoubtedly at times caused misfortunes to France; but a vulgar admiration for riches and contempt for intellect is a more despicable if politically less dangerous failing than an overestimate of the respect due to talent, and impartial observers may fancy that the political life, both of England and America, would gain something if the electors of London or of New York had some slight desire that their representatives were men whose names contributed to the glory of their country. For once in a generation Westminster fancied it would like to be represented by a man of European reputation. Within four years Westminster repented of this temporary deviation from the paths of good sense, and found in a captain and a successful newspaper-agent representatives far better suited to the taste of the constituency than the best-known economist and logician of his day. Mill's election and rejection were not merely local matters. What happened at Westminster might have happened in any other town within the United Kingdom, and might, with a mere

change of names, take place any day either in New York or Boston. Of the feeling which, when pushed to an absurd extreme, led France in the last generation to proclaim Bentham and Priestley citizens of the French Republic, and which, when kept within due limits, ensures that a man like Littré shall not be banished from public life, Anglo-Saxons on either side the Atlantic know nothing. Yet this sentiment of veneration for eminence is one of the noblest a nation can cherish, and prevents the love of equality from degenerating into the meanest jealousy of greatness.

This desire for equality is by friends and foes alike admitted to be the predominant sentiment of the French people, and, as long as it is freed from the base feelings with which it is apt in vulgar democracies to be connected, it is a passion in which Frenchmen may rightly glory. It means at its best a conviction that the qualities common to humanity are of far more importance than the accidental or conventional differences which divide mankind into classes, and it implies an assertion of the principle that men should be estimated in accordance with their essential qualities, and not according to their wealth or rank. That a fanatical faith in this principle enabled France at the end of the last century to shatter the feudal institutions of Europe is patent to all men. That a genuine belief in equality in many respects raises the social relations of modern Frenchmen, will probably be admitted by all who have studied modern France either by direct observation or by reflecting on the observations of others. What is less obvious is, that the power of France to amalgamate into one country provinces occupied by people of different races and history, owes its origin to what may be termed the practice of equality. English writers, such as Mr. Freeman, feel and express indignation at the ease with which inhabitants of, for example, Alsace or Savoy come to consider themselves Frenchmen. It were far better if English historians would, instead of deploring a fact nowise specially deplorable, consider how it has happened that while England after centuries has not been able to form a genuine union with Ireland, and found it a work of infinite difficulty to make one country even with Scotland, France has so dealt with the Germans of Alsace that they still turn their eyes with longing to Paris in spite of all the menaces or bribes of Berlin. The solution of this, as of some other problems suggested by French history, is that the peoples joined to France have at once been treated as French citizens, and that France with all her faults has perceived and acted on the principle that the practice of equality conciliates affection more than the practice of legal justice.

The "naughty boy" is full of vivacity. He loves his home. He admires talent. He practises the social virtues suggested by a sense of human equality. His faults, let it be granted, have proved fatal to success in life, but even his sober-minded rivals may, on reflection, confess that the spoilt child has some attractive features.

The Dutch in the Arctic Seas. By S. R. Van Campen. Vol. I. A Dutch Arctic Expedition and Route. 8vo, 263 pp. and map.—*The Barents Relics.* Described and Explained by J. K. H. J. De Jonghe, etc. Translated, with a preface, by S. R. Van Campen. 8vo, illustrations and map. (London: Trübner & Co. 1877.)—In the first of these volumes will be found no new contributions to knowledge of the polar region, but a discussion of the routes by which a new expedition may reasonably hope to penetrate it, and an earnest appeal to the Dutch nation to resume that place among the promoters of arctic discovery to which the exploits of Barents, Vlaming, and Giljes once entitled them. In his enthusiastic desire that the Dutch should do their part in the work of exploration the author will have the sympathy of every investigator. Yet the absence of any reference to the book of Payer, the results of the English expedition under Nares, or the colonizing projects of Weyprecht and Howgate, as well as the line of argument pursued, show the work to be the product of a state of mind on arctic matters which is not in harmony with the most modern ideas on the subject. Experience and observation of late years, as pointed out by Payer, have all tended to establish the conviction that progress towards the Pole is only practicable along a more or less continuous line of land, or at least not in open ocean. It seems tolerably certain that rifts and patches of open water (Polynia) may occur in any part of the arctic region, and may be brought about even in winter by the agency of currents and winds; but not a particle of evidence exists that an open polar ocean may even be hoped for. Here, however, the open polar sea is treated rather as an accepted fact than as an unverified hypothesis, and in only too many instances arguments which investigation of long-known facts would have shown to be doubtful, and which the latest investigations have exploded entirely, are quoted with the confidence with which one accepts a definition from a dictionary. By the Spitz-

bergen and Novaia Zemlia routes, advocated by the author, we might hope for additions to knowledge, and a favorable season might permit of fresh northward progress to some extent; but it is not to be supposed that, in the anticipations of the practical arctic navigator who may make the attempt, "thermometric gateways" leading to a warm and open polar sea will play any important part. Theories, however plausible, count for very little by the side of repeated experience, which in the author's arguments we find too little referred to. The author pays a warm tribute to Gustave Lambert, and calls deserved attention to his plan of exploration via Behring Strait. This, if it does not offer strong hopes of reaching very high latitudes, at least affords a most promising field for extending our geographical knowledge of the polar region, and has been too much neglected. The volume closes with a convenient table of arctic voyages chronologically arranged; it possesses a good index, and is neatly printed.

The second work above mentioned is a translation by Mr. Van Campen of an official document prepared at the Hague by De Jonghe on the relics discovered at Ice Haven, Novaia Zemlia, and which formed part of the articles left by Barents and Heemskerck on quitting their winter quarters, June 13, 1597. It will be remembered that after the crushing of their vessel by the ice these navigators erected a small house on the shore, where they wintered, losing two of their number by death, and that in the attempt to return around the northern end of the island Barents and two of his companions succumbed to sickness and exposure. Two hundred and seventy-four years after, the Norwegian captain, Carlsen, doubled Cape Mauritius, and subsequently discovered Barents's house, bringing away with him a number of relics, which were finally obtained by the Dutch Government from an English purchaser. A visit by another Norwegian skipper occurred in 1875, but he found little. In 1876 an adventurous English yachtsman, Mr. C. L. W. Gardiner, made a final search, with important results. The relics he obtained were presented by him to the Dutch Government, and form the subject of this brochure. The most important "find" was the remains of a writing by the hand of Barents, which he had "placed in a bandoleer and hanged it up in the chimney . . . that if any man chanced to come thither they might know what we had met with," etc. (De Vee's journal). With infinite pains this precious relic was unfolded and deciphered, and its contents, signed by the two navigators, clearly made out. A fac-simile in photolithography is given. The other articles, beside some undecipherable manuscripts, were the ordinary odds and ends of a ship's forecabin in those days, together with some old books containing quaint Dutch sacred poetry, coins, a flute, six pounds of candles, some quill-pens (still good), and other matters, all in a wonderful state of preservation, considering that the storms of nearly three centuries had passed over them. The hut became a total ruin some time since, and the report closes with a suggestion that a permanent monument to these ancient arctic heroes be placed at the locality by the Government of their fatherland.

Home Interiors. By E. C. Gardner, author of 'Homes, and How to Make Them,' 'Illustrated Homes,' etc. With illustrations. (Boston: Houghton, Osgood & Co. 1877. Pp. 268.)—Mr. Gardner's mission to be a mediator between the architect and those who distrust the profession has been shown, we think, to better advantage in his previous works. We have heretofore found his doctrine sounder in regard to general principles of construction and to broad relations than to details. Into his present subject taste, of course, enters largely, and to get down to the "common-sense" level in discussing matters of taste is attended with no little hazard. For instance, shall there be carpets in a house or not? Mr. Gardner pronounces against them, saying (p. 44): "I know it is not a matter of taste merely, but of common-sense and of eternal fitness," and then fortifies himself "from an artistic point of view," only to return in the next sentence to "the first principles of common-sense." The artistic view is that it is incongruous for "walls of hard-wood and plaster, solid wainscot of oak or maple, pilasters and columns, heavy furniture, piano, book-case, and table, marble mantel, busts, and bronzes," to rest, or appear to rest, "on a soft cushion of spun and woven wool." Art, however, which does not disdain to depict solid-looking gods and goddesses resting on clouds or floating in mid-air, is surely here mistakenly appealed to; while common-sense tells us that we are not shut up to the superficies of visible objects, but that we may be mindful at the same time of substance and substratum also. A wainscot resting on a Wilton carpet need not make us forget the inch-plank and twelve-inch joist underneath the carpet; and we shall be as little concerned for the stability of the house as we are for the safety of a weighty friend who sits down

upon a chair enveloped in chintz, or of bronzes and vases standing on a mantel hung all over with lambrequins.

Mr. Gardner earnestly insists on the door being an article of furniture, and not a part of the construction. This comes, apparently, from his conviction that the door is a nuisance, and from his therefore usually conceiving of it as standing open, and so being an obstacle to wall-decoration. The result is that he would have young ladies set to work and decorate the door itself—a justifiable treatment, certainly, but a corollary from a doubtful or false theorem.

There are some good remarks on screens on page 123, but we cannot say that we have been impressed by the praise of the Worcester "prophet" and his works.

Genealogical Notes: Concerning the pedigree of the Thomas Family of Maryland, and of the following connected families: Snowden, Buckley, Lawrence, Chew, Ellicott, Hopkins, Johnson, Rutherford, Fairfax, Schieffelin, Tyson, and others. Illustrated by Views and Coats of Arms. By Lawrence Buckley Thomas. (Baltimore: Lawrence B. Thomas, 1877. 4to, pp. 182.)—Notwithstanding our desire to welcome all attempts to record the history of Southern families, and the plea of the author as to the paucity of material, we cannot find it in our heart to say much in praise of this volume. It is well printed, expensively prepared, but badly arranged and defective in its essential authorities. The main stem is, of course, the Thomas family, descended from Philip Thomas of Maryland, a settler there in 1651, and one of some prominence in his generation. His will mentions two houses which he had in Bristol and lands in this country. The author says that this Philip was in the East India Company's service in 1621, and was the son of Evan Thomas of Swansea, whose pedigree was as follows:

Rice ap Griffith, of an illustrious Welsh family, married a daughter of the Duke of Norfolk, and was beheaded as a rebel in 1532. His oldest son was restored in blood and was the ancestor of the present Lord Dynevor. Thomas, younger son of Rice ap Griffith, is said to have been brought back to Wales, and to have married there, having a son, John Philip Thomas, lessee of mills at Kenchurch, County Monmouth, in 1591. This John Philip Thomas was father of Evan Thomas and grandfather of the emigrant.

We have looked in vain for the proof of this distinguished pedigree, though it may lurk in the mass of matter here collected. Until the evidence is given we can pronounce no judgment on the claim, but one page of proofs would be worth the score of pages devoted to irrelevant matters. The same criticism will apply to many of the other minor genealogies annexed to the main family record. Doubtless some of the affiliations are right, but we have no criterion by which to decide. Thus, we have the Buckley arms, and a pedigree from Phineas B. of Philadelphia, "supposed to be a cadet of the Lancashire family"; the Chew arms and the descendants of John Chew, "said to be a cadet of the family of Chew of Chewton." Then the De Zeng arms and pedigree, probably authentic, are followed by the Ellicott arms of no authority. The Fairfaxes are a part of our history, but the Georges and Gilpins are equally favored with coats of arms, on the authority of Burke only. The Lawrence article but reproduces the mistakes of former genealogists, notwithstanding recent corrections in print.

It would be useless to continue the list. The book gives evidence of industry and contains much information in regard to the families here. The author lacks a knowledge of the best methods of arranging his collections, and he has been over-credulous, or careless in estimating the evidence, in regard to the trans-Atlantic connections of the emigrants. We hope he will attend to both points in future works, so that we may receive the results of his meritorious labors with unalloyed satisfaction.

Old Naumkeag: An Historical Sketch of the City of Salem (Mass.) By C. H. Webber and W. S. Nevins. (Boston: Lee & Shepard. 1877. 12mo, pp. 312.)—This sketch could hardly be welcomed if it either pretended or seemed to be a tolerable substitute for the yet unwritten History of Salem—such a history as the place deserves and as so many far less important towns have secured. The authors, however, expressly disclaim this pretension, and can be unreservedly praised for their diligence in antiquarian research, which has produced an excellent guide-book to Salem and the adjoining towns carved out of her original territory. The illustrations consist of antiquated wood-cuts, most of which could have been replaced with heliotype from nature, and ought to be now. These would do much to relieve the present cheap aspect of the volume.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

Authors.—Titles.	Publishers.—Prices.
Borchester (Rev. Dr.), <i>Concessions of Liberalists to Orthodoxy</i>	(D. Lothrop & Co.) \$1 25
Maxwell (Prof. J. L.), <i>Matter and Motion</i> , eds.....	(Van Nostrand)
<i>My Intimate Enemy: a Tale</i>	(Claxton, Remsen & Haffelinger) 1 00
Renan (E.), <i>Mélanges d'Histoire et de Voyages</i> , swd.....	(F. W. Christern)
Sharswood (G. Jr.), <i>Table of Cases Overruled, etc., in the Reports of the State of Connecticut</i>	(T. & J. W. Johnson & Co.) 3 00
Strong (L. C.), <i>Poker's Moonshine: a Poem</i>	(G. P. Putnam's Sons) 1 00
Virgil (P.), <i>Books I, II, of the Æneid of Virgil</i>	(H. G. Bohn)
<i>Scribner's Monthly</i> , Vol. XV.....	(Scribner & Co.)
Week (F.), <i>Piano and Song</i>	(Lockwood, Brooks & Co.)
Twain (Mark), <i>Punch, Brothers, Punch</i>	(Sole, Woodman & Co.)

Fine Arts.

WOOD ENGRAVINGS AS WORKS OF ART.

THERE has been in two of the daily papers a curious discussion as to engravers of wood-cuts, and their position in the world of art, and on the propriety of including wood-cuts in collections of fine art. Mr. John La Farge, a very well-known painter, who has himself made many designs for wood-engraving, wrote to the committee who have in charge the gathering of paintings for Paris, and proposed to them to allow some ten feet square, or even less, of wall-space for American wood-engravings of the present day. This the committee declined to do, alleging, as we understand, want of power; their instructions seem to have been to collect and select oil paintings and water-color drawings. Perhaps this reason was not clearly given to Mr. La Farge. At all events he seems to have had still some hope of prevailing with the committee, when, a few days later, he wrote to some of the morning papers. His letters came out in the *World* and in the *Tribune* on the morning of Saturday, March 16, and contain these words:

"Though the number of artists engaged in it is small, we have attained to a very high standard, for the present day, in the matter of engraving on wood, and on this ground we can compete favorably with European nations, most of whom are decidedly our inferiors. . . . To lift a trade into high art in a country of commerce and manufacture is difficult. It is difficult in any part of the world; to have it happen here is a thing of which we should be proud."

This was as far as Mr. La Farge went. He did not say anything by way of depreciation of American fine art in other departments, but merely pleaded for the admission into the fine-art collection of specimens of the best American wood-cuts. The *World*, however, went a little farther, and, in an editorial of the same date, bewailed the "pitiable and vulgar show" which the United States made in Memorial Hall at Philadelphia, and suggested the adoption of Mr. La Farge's plan as a partial compensation for our backwardness in painting.

And certainly the *World* had reason on its side. The wood-cuts which Mr. La Farge had in mind ought to be included in our Paris fine art show, not only on account of their intrinsic excellence, nor only on account of their excellence relatively to what is being done in the same line in Europe, but because we can hardly hope to hold our own in painting, in sculpture, in etching, or other process of engraving, nor in any of the decorative arts whatever. In this one matter of wood-cut illustration to books, thanks to the genius of Henry Marsh and to the powerful aid he has had from one or two designers and one or two engravers, we can afford to meet rivalry. Does this mean that there is nothing good in American painting? By no means; but the whole body of American work in oil and water-color, taken together, is slight and feeble beside that which England or France has to show. Or does it mean that no good wood-cut illustration exists elsewhere? Not so; but there does exist now in America a little school which produces very original, beautiful, and permanently valuable work in that art—work which no other nation can surpass, so far as we know, at this time.

That same evening, however, the *Evening Post* came to the front in defence of the old theory—what might be called the oil-paint theory—that there is no fine art outside of oil-paintings in frames and marble statues on pedestals. We quote:

"The engraver is little, if not an imitator and a plodder. . . . His business is to copy, not to create; to interpret, not to meddle with the text. In a fine-art exhibition the artist's absence cannot be compensated for by the presence of the engraver, who, so far from filling the chair of the former, is scarcely large enough to rattle about in it."

Thus a fresh question was dragged into the discussion. Mr. La Farge and the *World* had been contented to ask for the exhibition of certain beautiful wood-cuts, and had not raised the question whether their beauty was due to a plodding copyist or an "artist." Mr. La Farge certainly, and the *World* probably, were well aware that the beauty of a wood-cut is due to a certain ability on the part of the designer to adapt his design to the

proposed material, and to a certain power on the part of the engraver to interpret aright the artist's thought. Many of our readers have seen, in exhibitions or elsewhere, some drawing by Mr. La Farge himself on the wood block; did it ever occur to them to ask how a fresh-taught pupil of some "School of Design" would render that drawing, and, on the other hand, what Marsh would make of it? Two years ago the "Bishop Hatto" was exhibited at the Academy of Design—a most powerful design, charmingly drawn on the whitened surface of the box-wood. This year a proof from the engraved block was shown. Unluckily the two can never be compared. But let any person look at the proof and try to imagine what a merely mechanical wood-engraver would have made of it. Or examine the beautiful pictures which *Scribner's Monthly* and *St. Nicholas* sometimes give their readers. Space does not suffice us here to mention instances, but those finest engravings are sometimes made from drawings far inferior to them in beauty. It may safely be asserted that the power of fine art shown in Marsh's translation of a sketch on gray paper in black and white into a design of hard black lines which can be printed off on paper at steam-press rate of speed, is as original and peculiar, and almost as important, as that shown in the best of the designs he has given him. It cannot be too often repeated that nobody has proposed a general gathering of wood-cuts from magazines and weekly papers, from advertisements and show-bills, but only the admission of a certain small number in which the original design and the engraver's manipulation have worked together to produce a triumphant result. In some of these indeed the engraver has been the only person employed, as in Marsh's marvellous engravings of insects made with the creature lying beside the block.

On Sunday, the 17th, the *World* answered, not altogether as cogently as might have been expected, but still in an article true, sound, and to the purpose. And to this, again, answered the *Evening Post*, on Monday, in a short article of a character simply astounding, considering what the controversy was about. It was a sad attempt at ridicule, with nothing salient enough to quote, nothing more positive than an expression of amazement that the *World* "thinks this country to be behind every other civilized country in the matter of the fine arts, and that our pictures at Philadelphia were 'pitiable and vulgar.'" The *World's* answer to all this was jocose, and chiefly confined to advising somebody to take out to Europe a consignment of American paintings (probably of the *Post's* picking out) with a view of ascertaining the position of America in the world of art. We are not aware that the newspaper discussion went further. But on Thursday Mr. George Inness came out in the columns of the *Post* as a defender and farther expounder of the oil-paint theory. Mr. Inness's view of the case is, briefly, that the production of an engraving does not require the same artistic power as that required for a painting; and, although this looks like a truism, the reasons given are worth citing. The painter does original work; the power of producing rapidly is greater in painting than in engraving, and, therefore, no one would confine himself to engraving if he could paint "equally well"; the painter needs greater resources than the engraver, because he works direct from nature, while the engraver only "produces an imitation, and not a translation, excepting so far as a reproduction in color is a translation" (a statement which seems to us exactly the reverse of truth, in every way); and finally, the painter uses color, "the most difficult thing in the world."

Well, it has never been pretended, to our knowledge, by the lovers of wood-cuts that fine art in black and white is equal in dignity to the art of the colorist. What was thought of that matter in the time of David and "Ingres élève de David" (as reads the signature on a drawing now exhibiting in New York), we do not stop to enquire; but in our day it is generally admitted that no other human art can claim quite equal dignity with the art of the colorist. Yet, as Mr. Inness enquires, "Where are our colorists?" Let the one or two bits of color we have to show go to Paris; who objects? But Mr. Inness must know they will amount to but little, in the world-wide gathering at Paris, even if he agrees with us in thinking that color is not now the strong point of the Continental schools of painting. And if we fail to excel in art of the first rank—say painting for color chiefly, if Mr. Inness likes, and in art of many kinds only just inferior to that—why is it not very important for us to make the best show we can in that one still humbler art in which we do happen to excel? The question is not what fine art is the noblest; all fine arts are noble. The question is not whether all wood-cut engravers are artists; notoriously they are not. Mr. Inness's last sentence is a good text for all our essay: "The presence of the creative power is always acknowledged to be the quality essential to great art." Then let us send to Paris no woodcut in which that presence is not manifest. We will not make so strict a law for the paintings.

